

## CLAIMS

1) A unit (1) for forming a molten glass bead (2),  
the unit (1) comprising a fixed supporting frame (4); a  
5 guide (11) integral with said frame (4) and having a  
substantially vertical axis (12); a slide (13) fitted in  
axially-sliding manner to said guide (11) and supporting  
at least one feed punch (6) parallel to said axis (12);  
and actuating means (10) for moving the slide (13)  
10 cyclically in both directions along the guide (11);  
characterized in that said actuating means (10) comprise  
a linear electric motor (15).

2) A unit as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in  
that said linear electric motor (15) comprises a fixed  
15 member (16) connected integrally to said frame (4); and a  
translating member (17) connected to said fixed member  
(16) and connected integrally to said slide (13) to move  
in unison with the slide (13).

3) A unit as claimed in Claim 2, characterized in  
20 that said slide (13) is connected directly to said  
translating member (17).

4) A unit as claimed in Claim 2, characterized in  
that said fixed member (16) extends alongside and  
parallel to said guide (11), and is spaced transversely  
25 apart from the axis (12) of the guide (11).

5) A unit as claimed in Claim 2, characterized in  
that said slide (13) and said translating member (17)

extend substantially along a common vertical axis (12) of travel.

6) A unit as claimed in Claim 5, characterized in that said slide (13) and said translating member (17) are  
5 aligned with each other along said common axis (12) of travel.

7) A unit as claimed in Claim 5, characterized in that said common axis coincides with the axis (12) of said guide (11).